

April 2, 1974

Dear Clint:

I don't know whether you will be interested in this or not but I thought I would communicate it anyway. You have absolutely no way of verifying what I am going to relate, but I assure you that it is as related.

A few days ago I had an occasion to attend a meeting held in a conference room adjacent to the central communication system for the Cincinnati Police force. This room was what I imagined to be the local analogue to a "War Room" to be used as a command center in case of widespread emergency. I thought that it represented the sort of room you might be interested in having your people remember. As a "pilot study" I thought I would try to see how applicable the mnemonic system might be to this sort of task. Between my participations in the conference I tried to store mnemonically as many details of the room as I thought might be important. I was, myself, rather surprised at the results.

The associated diagram shows the room with position numbers corresponding to the "one is a dollar bill" system.

The room was large, about 30' by perhaps 18'. The large rectangle on the drawing represents the conference table. I was seated at the position marked by the 0 in the northeast corner. There were 15 men at the meeting. I met only one new person that I did not previously know so I had only one new name to learn. His name was Lt. Bear (spelling a guess) seated at the triangle. Five of the participants were uniformed police. They were seated at the positions marked with X's. On the table were fourteen telephones; 2 red, 2 light brown, and ten black. There was also a tape recorder (small rectangle) operated by a man named Palmer, seated near the recorder.

Along the east wall at 11 and 12 were large windows looking into a very large room containing police communications systems - there were six or seven men in the room operating various pieces of communication equipment. I saw no more of the communications room for I was seated with my back toward this window. At about 12 there was a clock between the window and the ceiling. Slightly to the north of the clock was a small grey box with two protruding control knobs - either potentiometers or switches. The function of the box was not obvious. At 1 there was a door leading into the communications room.

The entire south wall (2, 3, 4) was blank. The entrance door by which I entered the room was located at 5. The wall at 6 was blank but there was a teletype machine at 7. At 8 there was a pair of tabular charts, one indicating "Status" of personnel and the other labeled "Deployment". I could not see the details of these charts because of the bad viewing angle.

At 9 there were two charts showing what appeared to be a key for map symbols. One was headed "Police" and the other headed "Fire". There

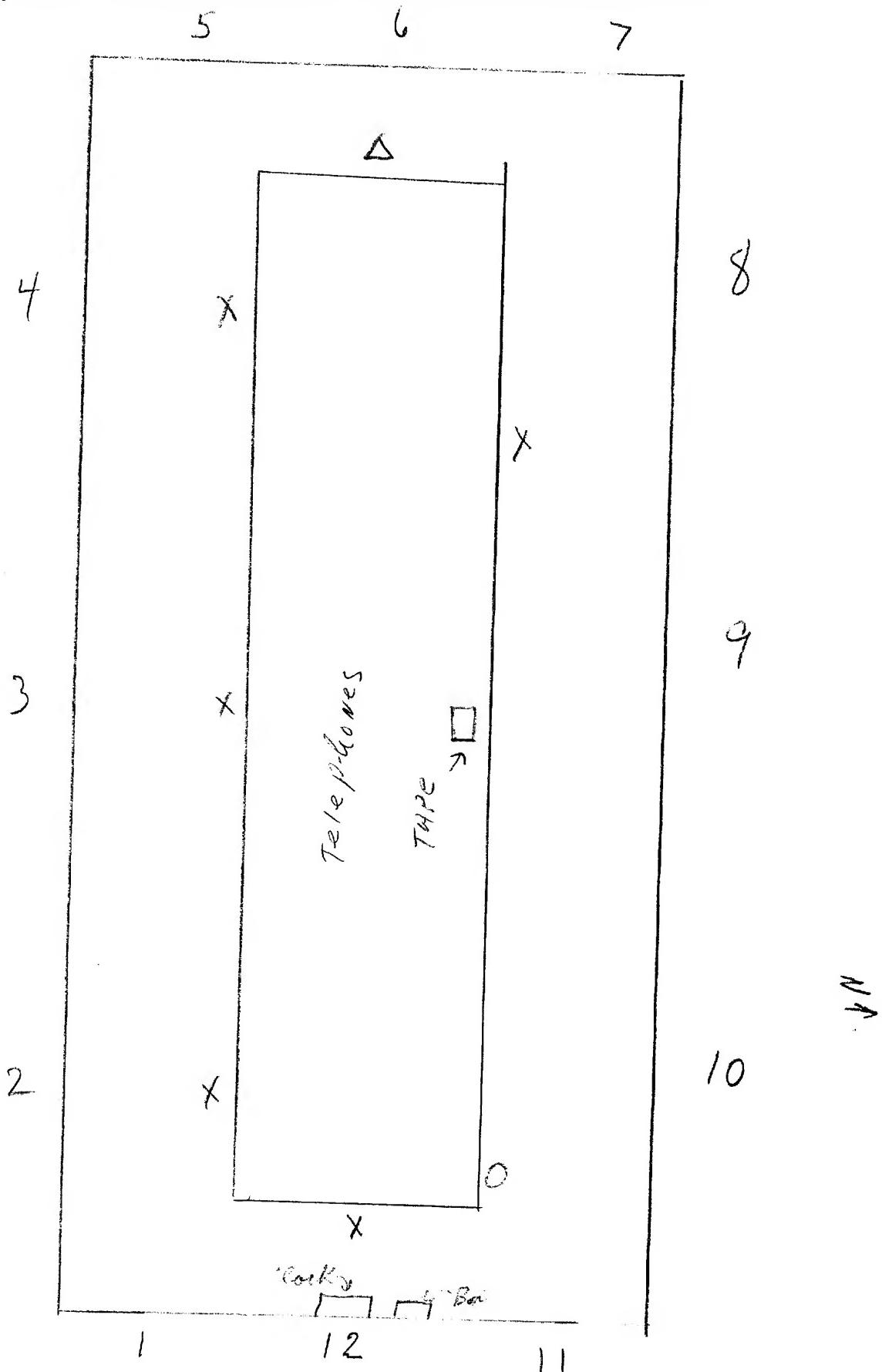
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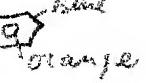
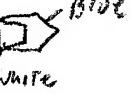
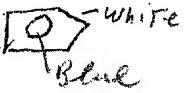
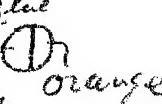
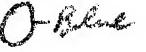
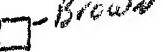
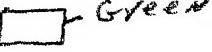
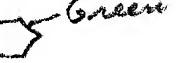
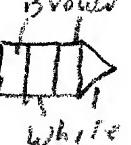
were fifteen symbols under each heading. In between my interactions in the ongoing conference I was able to memorize the "Police" symbols but did not have time to "store" the "Fire" symbols, except to notice that most of these symbols were red. I'm fairly sure that I could have memorized them given more time. I have listed all the police symbols on the second attached sheet. I'm almost certain they are correct - I might have missed one or not gotten the label exactly right on one or two but it's pretty accurate. Above the map symbols charts there was a wall thermostat.

At 9 was a large map of the city of Cincinnati. At 10 (or, really, a bit east of 10) there was a door which led to a corridor and to another door leading into the communications room.

I think that about does it. I wish I could have "stored" the fire symbols and maybe I could with more practice. I was in this room for about two hours but my actual learning time was about thirty or forty minutes, most of it being devoted to learning the symbols. It was then about five hours before I had a chance to write down my memories - three of these hours were spent in conducting my classes. I was rather pleased with this as a first attempt to apply mnemonics to one of the type of problems in which you are interested. I think it's going to work OK. I think we will be able to teach others to do this too.

I would appreciate your treating this communication as being confidential.  
Thanks.



1. Police Cruiser  Blue
2. Ambulance  Blue  
Red
3. Mobile Supervisor  Blue  
White
4. Mobile Command Unit  Blue  
Orange
5. C. C. Car  Blue  
White
6. Van  White  
Blue
7. Fixed Command Unit  Blue  
Orange
8. Foot Patrol  Blue  
Blue  
Blue
9. Traffic Post  Blue
10. Staging Area  Brown
11. District Station 
12. Barricade  Green
13. Wrecker  Green
14. Aircraft 
15. National Guard  Brown  
White